

A Virtual Delight

UCSB's Art, Design & Architecture Museum takes its galleries online during the coronavirus lockdown ~ www.museum.ucsb.edu/exhibitions/online

By **Jim Logan** / *The UC Santa Barbara Current*

WHAT DOES A WORLD-CLASS REPOSITORY OF FINE ART AND MORE THAN A MILLION ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS do when it's forced to shut its doors? It brings its collections and exhibits to the public. UC Santa Barbara's Art, Design & Architecture Museum, shuttered amid the coronavirus pandemic, has brought its exhibitions online.



Photo by Harry De Ziffer

Silvia Perea

"The museum has a long-established online trajectory, but the present lockdown has given us the opportunity to think about our digital domain in a more intentional and strategic manner," said Silvia Perea, acting director of the museum and curator of architecture and design. "Traditionally," she added, "we have thought of our raison d'être as primarily associated with what happened in the galleries — our audiences' visitation, engagement with exhibitions, provision of feedback, participation in events. The current



Hostile Terrain 94, on virtual exhibit at the AD&A Museum, bears witness to the plight of migrants.

situation has shifted the perception of our purpose from interacting physically to virtually. In this regard, we are imagining ways of complementing our online offerings with participatory experiences."

Visitors to the museum's website can expect small doses of new, carefully curated content, Perea said, with a focus on quality over quantity while ensuring a diversity of offerings.

"So far," she noted, "we have transformed the exhibitions that were on view in our galleries into online portals as a means to maintain their accessibility during their respective planned cycles. These exhibitions will soon feature videos from artists represented in them.

The museum has also launched two contests, "ADA in Space" for kids and "Fables in Labels" for adults. In the first, artists aged three to eleven are invited to draw what they think life on another planet would be like. The ten best — judged by a curator — will be featured in an exhibition



Irresistible Delights highlights recent gifts to the AD&A Museum.



Common Bonds: Artist and Architects on Community is one of the AD&A Museum's virtual exhibits.

on the museum's website.

In the adults' contest, participants write a brief fictional account of a precious 15th-century bronze medal by Giovanni Boldu. The winner will receive a free annual membership to the museum and have his or her historical fiction included in the upcoming exhibition of the museum's Morgenroth Collection, where the medal is held. Details for both contests are on the AD&AM website.

In addition, Perea said, the museum is enriching the online records of its Fine Art and Architecture and Design Collections. It's also planning the months ahead to ensure that its upcoming exhibitions and programs can be enjoyed remotely.

Not surprisingly, the move to the digital realm is a work in progress, one that has museum staff working to put together future exhibitions.

"Even though we have a website and a sound presence on social media, we feel we are in the infancy of what we dream of doing," Perea explained. "By now, we are actively analyzing online visitation data, and collecting feedback from the museum's audience and team. In this regard, we are having regular brainstorming meetings to come up with initiatives that, in responding to data analysis, can be inspiring and useful for both our audiences and the museum."

For Perea and the museum staff, taking exhibitions online is more than giving the public another distraction in challenging times.

"In the long-gone past," she said, "to curate meant to 'heal the ailments or passions of the soul.' If we can't go that far, we hope that the art we present through our website and social media reconnects us with our human condition in this moment of global isolation and segregation."

"The thriving capacity that our community has demonstrated in these unexpected and challenging circumstances sets an inspiring example for all of us at the AD&A Museum," Perea continued. "As we keep on working on our virtual interface, we welcome everyone's comments, ideas, and feedback, and remain 'on the line' for anything we can assist with."

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Love Art? Hate COVID-19?

By **Kerry Methner**, PhD / VOICE

CREATIVITY AND HEART ARE EMERGING AS LOCALS RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES OF THIS TIME... and artists and gallerists can be especially adept. At Silo118, Bonnie Rubenstein has pitched an online benefit as the perfect response.

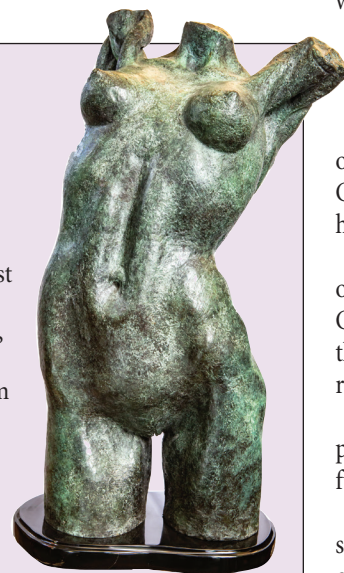
"I was feeling a bit helpless while all this panic was swirling around. I'm an old activist harking back to the 60s and wanted to help out in some capacity, but I'm isolated," she recalled. "I started thinking about raising funds for an organization working to help people who have lost jobs, have no money to pay for food or rent. Then I quickly learned that some of Silo118 artists may be in that same situation, so it all clicked together in one great AHA moment - I could try to help them while raising money for important organizations. I truly have loved working on this campaign and hopefully we can do some good. I want to expand it and keep it going for as long as it is needed."

The gallery will be supporting their artists and organizations that deliver needed services and goods to affected communities, providing food, shelter, and supplies for people out of work and to health workers on the front lines of caring for the very sick.

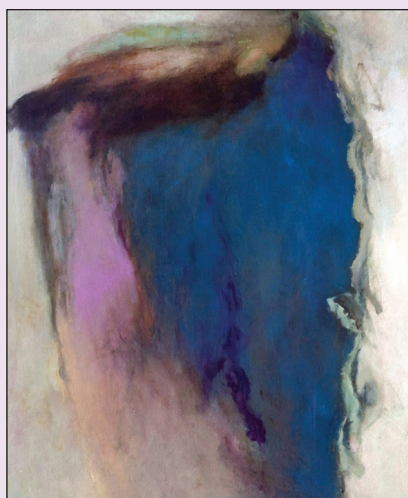
Artists agreed to reduce the price of their art and donate a good percentage of the sale to selected non-profits. The result is an online exhibition of beautiful works for everyone to view and that is offered to buyers to at a fraction of their usual prices. Discounts average between 30 to 60 percent. Many pieces are under \$500.



Gruppi, Archival pigment print on Museo Silver Rag, Limited edition of 15 by **Susannah Hays**



Calafia, bronze, by **Enrique Avilez**



Unpredictable, Oil on canvas by **Tom Post**

Participating Artists: Michael Armour, Brian Atchley, Enrique Avilez, Mike Blaha, Patricia Houghton Clarke, Sophie Cooper, Doug Dafoe, Sheryl Denbo, Max Gleason, Susannah Hays, Sol Hill, Martin Lapalma, Karen Lehrer, Barbara Marks, Cynthia Martin, Salvatore Matteo, Gerald Patrick, Tom Pazderka, Martin Sherman, and Roger Stevens.

Participating non-profits: Feed the Children, Farmworkers' COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Fund, Single Mothers Outreach, SHIELDS for Families, Food Not Bombs, America's Food Fund, World Central Kitchen, Feeding America, and Global Citizen. Find the entire exhibition online at www.Silo118.com